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P E T I T I O N .

*To the Honorable, the Senate and House of Representatives, of
the Commonwealth of Massachusetts, now in session at Bos-
ton :—*

The undersigned, Executive Committee for the State of Maine, appointed by the convention held at Portland, on the 31st day of July last and succeeding days, to promote the construction of the European and North American Railway, and corporators named in the act incorporating said company, passed by the legislature of Maine, and approved August 20th, 1850, respectfully request your honorable body to apply a portion of the proceeds of the public lands lying in the state of Maine, and belonging to the Commonwealth of Massachusetts, in aid of said undertaking, and to adopt such other measures as will contribute the means to ensure the early completion of said work.

The separation of the district of Maine from Massachusetts proper, was finally secured by allowing to Massachusetts a moiety, or an equal share of the public lands lying within the territory thus separated, amounting at the time to 4,308,379 acres, after giving up the territory ceded by the treaty of Washington. These lands, at that time, were regarded of very little value, and soon after the separation the terms of a bargain were all but consummated, for the extinguishment by Maine of the title of Massachusetts to all of said lands, for the sum of \$100,000. Most unfortunately for the prosperity of Maine the proposed arrangement was defeated, and since that time the State of Massachusetts has received large sums of money into

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her treasury from the proceeds of the sales of said lands and timber, amounting, on the 31st of December, 1850, to \$1,998,226 55, and there still remained unsold lands within the limits of this state belonging to Massachusetts, equal to 1,834,547 acres, which are exempt from taxation while owned by the Commonwealth, and there is also a balance still due to the treasury of the State on account of said sales.

From the time of the separation till the year 1835, the progress of Maine in business and wealth was equal to that of the other portions of New England generally, and in population the growth of Maine was about equal to that of the whole country, and vastly greater than that of Massachusetts. Our valuable water-power, the superior quality of our soil, our immense tracts of valuable timber, the numerous safe and accessible harbors upon our coast, and the cheap price of land, with many valuable mineral resources, and above all, the salubrity and healthfulness of our climate, invited emigration of the most valuable class of persons from all parts of New England, including many from Massachusetts.

The year 1835 was the turning point in the history of New England. Massachusetts opened three of her great lines of railway, reaching in that year to Providence, to Worcester, and to Lowell; and the railway system of Massachusetts became firmly implanted upon her soil. Industry was quickened thereby, enterprise stimulated, and the price of labor enhanced. The tide of emigration throughout all New England was immediately turned upon Massachusetts. The sagacious industry of Massachusetts wielding this great agency, the railway, with a bolder and more intelligent grasp than any other people, changed as by a magic power, the whole history of the continent.

The financial and commercial revulsion which swept over Maine, and most other parts of the Union, with such disastrous consequences, from 1835 to 1840, was scarcely felt in Boston or in Massachusetts, except by indirect results, from losses by debt. The price of real estate, the great criterion of value, was but slightly affected in Massachusetts, while in every por-

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tion of Maine it fell to a merely nominal value, and to this day, the price of real estate throughout Maine, with but few exceptions, and these exceptions manufacturing or trading towns, is not greater than it was prior to the speculations of 1835.

The census of 1850 disclosed to the people of Maine the astounding fact, that Massachusetts from 1840 to 1850, increased at the rate of 34 8-10 per cent, showing a density of population equal to 132 persons to the square mile, while the state of Maine had only increased at the rate of 16 6-10 per cent, and contains a population of only 17 8-10 persons to the square mile. The result of the census of 1850 were not generally anticipated by our own people, though many had perceived the silent but gradual withdrawal of much of the wealth and business talent of Maine to Massachusetts, while there was also a strong tendency among the farming interest to emigrate West, and that the agricultural portions of our state were making very little if any progress, and some of them were diminishing in population.

The rapid growth of every portion of Massachusetts for the last fifteen years, has given an increased value to all fixed property within the State, which increase of value has given still greater development to the industrial energies of her whole people, the fruits of which are now seen, in the railways which cover the State as with a net-work, in her improved agriculture, and in her factories and her workshops, which make every valley resound with the hum of her industry.

Efforts have been made within the last few years in Maine, to introduce railways, and in other respects to imitate in some measure, the policy of Massachusetts. A system of railways has been entered upon which promises the most satisfactory results, the value and importance of which are by no means confined to the limits of the state.

Some of the railways of Maine, in which little if any Massachusetts capital is embarked, are, as we believe, of paramount value and importance to Massachusetts. This will be admitted by any one who thoroughly appreciates the intimate business relations of the two states. That the interests of the two states

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are most intimately connected are clearly seen by any one who is in the habit of considering their geographical and commercial relations, and the position of Maine in reference to the residue of the country.

The value of a central position is equally apparent in relation to the laws of trade, as in reference to social and political advantages. The great heart of commerce, and the seat of political power on this continent at the present time, lie to the south and west of Massachusetts. Every year shows more and more closely the absorbing influence of a great commercial capital over superior industry, greater forecast, and more frugal economy in the habits of the people.

Over twenty years ago, Boston was led to perceive that New York was beginning to draw from her business, consequent upon its rapid growth after the opening of the Erie Canal. The industrial policy of Massachusetts then wisely entered upon, was the only means within her reach, to retain her relative position.

Her success is seen in the more rapid growth of Massachusetts over that of the state of New York, from 1840 to 1850. That of Massachusetts being equal to 34 8-10 per cent, while New York has grown at the rate of 27 per cent only, upon the population of 1840.

The great competition with Massachusetts industry however, is from her more southern neighbors, and the commercial supremacy of New York, naturally attracts to it, trade which formerly was confined to Boston.

The railway avenues extending from New York city northward, will soon connect with and cross many of the lines extending from Boston westward, upon which,—as more easy gradients are found running to New York, than can be obtained in ascending from the Connecticut valley to Boston,—the trade of Vermont and portions of Massachusetts and New Hampshire will naturally flow to the largest market.

Competition is daily becoming more and more active between New York and Boston. The opening of the New York and New Haven Railroad gave a greater impulse to the business of

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New York city than any event of the last fifteen years. The extension of the Hudson River Railroad to Albany and Troy, and the completion of the Harlem Railroad to a point of intersection with the Albany and West Stockbridge Railroad will offer a stronger competition to the Western Railroud than it has yet encountered, already great, as is shown by the diminished quantity of produce brought over it the last year.

Every merchant and business man of Boston is aware of the fact, that a very large portion of the business of that metropolis comes from the state of Maine, an amount far greater than the community generally suppose. In confirmation of the truth of this statement we confidently refer to the merchants of Boston and to the public records of the national and state government. Of the 7004 vessels which entered Boston Harbor in the year 1847, 2594 were from Maine. Four tenths of the entire travel which enters the city of Boston over her *seven trunk* lines of railway, pass over the two roads running from Boston into Maine.

The returns for 1847, of the bills redeemed at the Suffolk Bank, will show, that over thirteen millions of dollars of the circulation of the Maine Banks were redeemed in Boston in that year, and it is believed that those of 1850 will show a still greater amount.

Other illustrations equally suggestive might be given, all tending to show the immense trade between Maine and Massachusetts.

The people of Maine consume more largely of the manufactures of Massachusetts than any other population of equal numbers:

Is it not for the interest of Boston therefore, to build up and foster industry in Maine, in preference to the Connecticut Valley or the country lying west of it? The trade of Maine naturally falls to Boston, and must pass by Boston, if it seeks the great market south.

The inevitable laws of trade, resulting from the geographical position of Maine, make her prosperity and that of Massachusetts closely connected, if not identical.

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Any line of railway that throws business and travel east of Boston contributes directly to her trade and business. More or less of this trade and business reach Boston, or pass through it going to New York. As well might the intelligent stranger pass through your capitol without noticing its lofty columns and its symmetrical architecture, as the intelligent business man pass through your city without being instinctively led to trade with a community, so renowned for thrift, and successful enterprise, as the merchants of Boston. Intercourse begets traffic, as naturally as exercise imparts strength to the body, and so long as the laws of nature remain unchanged, the trade of Maine can never seek New York or a more southern market without giving to Massachusetts the first offer of her trade and her business.

No intelligent mind can doubt the ability of Maine to sustain a population as dense as that of the agricultural and manufacturing portions of Massachusetts, under the influence of similar laws, and like habits of business, with an amount of capital engaged in productive industry in the same ratio to the population. This would give Maine, with 32,268 square miles of territory, a population exceeding four millions of people.

It seems apparent to us therefore, that Massachusetts has the most direct interest to give encouragement to every enterprise calculated to advance the prosperity of Maine, aside from the great interest in her public lands.

Among the important enterprises of the day, and one of equal importance to Massachusetts, as to Maine, is the plan of the European and North American Railway. It is proposed to extend across the entire breadth of this state, in continuation of the lines already built or in process of construction, a line of railway over the most direct and practicable route from the city of Boston to St. John and Halifax.

Without claiming for this line, any advantages commonly ascribed to it, as a means of shortening the time of passage between New York and London,—thereby attracting over it the great stream of European travel,—it is enough to say that it is proposed to extend a line of railway through a region of coun-

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try rich in every natural advantage,—forests, soil, climate and mineral wealth,—over a route the most direct and practicable that can be ascertained, irrespective of intermediate localities, remote from water communication, giving it perfect immunity from all competition forever, by securing the most direct possible line, between the great centres of population and business.

The accomplishment of such a work must add largely to the value of all the real estate in Maine, and particularly to the public lands of Maine and Massachusetts.

It is not supposed that the line can pass through any of the lands belonging to either state, but branch lines are already proposed reaching to the neighborhood of townships in which the state of Massachusetts is interested. If carried across the state it must inevitably enhance, by at least one hundred per cent., the lands of Massachusetts.

The capital of Maine is already severely tasked, by the rapid extension of her railway lines from Portland to Montreal, and from Portland to Bangor, and the other railroad enterprises, in which her people are embarked. The capital sought by us, is, for the extension of the line from Bangor to the boundary of New Brunswick, which would ensure at once a connection by railway with the city of St. John, by a line to be extended from that city to said boundary, by the people of New Brunswick, and eventually to Halifax, Nova Scotia.

Without enlarging upon topics familiar to the public men of Massachusetts, or suggesting more fully the many inducements that exist for the adoption of an enlarged and liberal policy towards Maine, appropriating a portion of the proceeds of her public lands to the enterprise named, securing, as it probably would, with the assistance which Maine can give to it, the accomplishment of this work at an early day, we beg to express the opinion that the carrying out of the plan proposed will enhance the value of the public lands of Massachusetts, lying in the state of Maine, to an amount equal if not greater than that expended for this purpose, and by promoting intercourse, and stimulating industry within this state largely increase the trade of Boston.

The undersigned therefore, in behalf of the interests we represent, and for the reason set forth in this Memorial, and for numerous other reasons, which will suggest themselves to the enlightened statesmen of this ancient Commonwealth, earnestly but most respectfully request, that the proceeds of the public lands of the Commonwealth, or at least one half thereof, for a term of years, or an amount equal to what the state of Maine may appropriate therefor, may be set aside for the purposes within set forth, and that the Commonwealth of Massachusetts will grant such other and further assistance and encouragement to the undertaking, as the interests of the people of the state may require.

And as in duty bound will ever pray,

JOHN A. POOR,

ELIJAH L. HAMLIN,

ANSON G. CHANDLER.

March 5, 1851.

COMMONWEALTH OF MASSACHUSETTS,
House of Representatives, March 8th, 1851. }

Ordered, That the foregoing petition be printed for the use of the Legislature, and that the same be referred to a Joint Select Committee, and that

Messrs. CALEB CUSHING, of Newbury.
BENJ. R. CURTIS, of Boston,
JOHN T. PAINE, of Melrose,
J. M. EARLE, of Worcester,
N. WOOD, of Fitchburgh,
JOHN BRANNING, of Monterey,
GEO. O. BRASTOW, of Somerville,
THOMAS TRASK, of Salem,

be appointed on the part of the House.

Sent up for concurrence. LEWIS JOSSELYN, Clerk.

IN SENATE, March 11th, 1851.

Read and referred in concurrence, and

Messrs. WOOD, of Worcester.
GRISWOLD of Franklin, and
SEAVER of Suffolk.

appointed, on the part of the Senate.

C. L. KNAPP, Clerk.

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